

CITY OF FRESNO ENTERPRISE ZONE EXPANSION POLICY

BACKGROUND:

The California Enterprise Zone Program was created to stimulate economic growth in the most economically distressed areas throughout the State. The Enterprise Zone Program is a long-term (15 year) partnership between local governments and private companies to generate new private sector investment and growth. The State provides performance-based tax credits and incentives to Enterprise Zone business to:

- Promote “Smart Growth” by revitalizing chronically deteriorated areas;
- Hire the most difficult-to-place residents in private sector jobs; and
- Retain, expand, and reward businesses that participate in these objectives.

Agencies that apply to become part of an Enterprise Zone must be strongly committed to an economic revitalization and development program. As the State no longer requires the boundaries to be “contiguous and continuous”, the following factors will be considered as the criteria to add new areas to the City of Fresno Enterprise Zone (EZ). The applicant(s) must satisfy the following areas to the satisfaction of Downtown and Community Revitalization Department and the Fresno City Council:

- a. Commitment to Achieve State EZ Goals: Demonstrate a commitment to achieve the objectives of the State and local EZ Program to create jobs, train, and hire individuals within the eligible categories.
- b. Commitment to Achieve Citywide Economic Development Objectives: Support the objectives of the City of Fresno Enterprise Zone to create jobs, diversify the economy, and improve the skills of the workforce.
- c. Land Use Designation: Industrial and Commercial areas are considered the highest priorities for inclusion in EZ as follows:
 1. Areas currently improved with facilities used for industrial and commercial uses;
 2. Areas zoned industrial and commercial with development proposals would be the second priority.
 3. Areas currently authorized by local land use policies would be the third highest priority;
 4. Areas designated or zoned as commercial and industrial in local zoning maps, general plans, and community plans would be considered the fourth priority.
 5. Areas located near transportation corridors selected by the local government by resolution for designation in general plan, specific plan, or community plan would be considered the fifth highest priority for inclusion in the EZ.

- d. Industry Clusters Proposed for Expansion: Proposed area shall target the creation of jobs in industry clusters of highest priority for the City of Fresno.
- e. Authorization and Community Support: Prior to the submittal to the State of a request to be added to the EZ, the Downtown and Community Revitalization Department shall seek the approval of the Fresno City Council.
- f. Frequency of Applications Filed with the City Council: An application or a group of applications shall be submitted to the Fresno City Council, by the Economic Development Department, no more than once per year, on or around October. A greater frequency could be considered at the discretion of the Enterprise Zone Manager and/or Downtown and Community Revitalization Director.
- g. Frequency of Applications Filed with the State: An application or a group of applications shall be submitted to the State of California, by the Downtown and Community Revitalization Department, no more than once per year, on or around October, following approval by the Fresno City Council. A greater frequency could be considered at the discretion of the Enterprise Zone Manager and/or Downtown and Community Revitalization Director.

The City of Fresno Enterprise Zone covered a total of 19,628.31 acres at designation. Regulations allow the zone to expand by up to 15% (2,944.2465 acres). This will be made up of no more than 1,500 acres by October 14, 2011, 2,500 acres by October 14, 2016 and any remaining acreage by October 14, 2021.

DEFINITIONS:

Application: An Application is a proposal submitted by an applicant to the City of Fresno Downtown and Community Revitalization Department .

Applicant: An applicant may be a property owner or long-term leaseholder, or his/her agent, as reflected by a written document authorizing such a representation and/or, a local jurisdiction.

Application Processing Fee: The Fresno City Council at its own discretion may establish a fee or charge to reimburse the Downtown and Community Revitalization Department for the expenses associated with processing of an Application for Inclusion in the Enterprise Zone.

PROCESS:

1. Interested applicants may submit an application for the addition of an area to the current boundaries of the Enterprise Zone. The application must make the case that the proposed area meets the above stated qualifications. Applications should be directed to:

Incentive Zone Manager
City of Fresno
Downtown and Community Revitalization Department
2600 Fresno St., Room 2156-02
Fresno, CA 93721

2. The Downtown and Community Revitalization Department will review the application and determine whether it meets the above stated qualifications and whether it is a good fit for the City of Fresno Enterprise Zone. If approved, the application will be reviewed by the Mayor Council Economic Development Task Force (MCEDTF), or similar committee.
3. If the application receives approval from the MCEDTF (or the Fresno County Economic Development Corporation, Redevelopment Agency, and Development and Resources Management Department in lieu of the MCEDTF), the application will be prepared for submittal to the Fresno City Council. An application processing fee may be assessed at this point. Approval by the Fresno City Council is required in order for the State of California to accept an application.
4. If approved by the Fresno City Council, the application will be submitted to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (or alternative lead agency) for final approval. Only the Incentive Zone Manager or Downtown and Community Revitalization Director (or other City appointed designee) is authorized to submit applications to the State.